

excessive. In spite of all the eloquence of the moral preachers, that form of dress which shows neck and bosom has become established, only that it is specialized for full dress and covered by conventionalization.

186. Conventionalization. Conventionalization also comes into play to cover the dress of the ballet or burlesque opera and the bathing dress. Conventionalization always includes strict specification and limits of time, place, and occasion, beyond which the same dress would become vicious. Amongst Moslems and Orientals this conventionalization as to dress has never been introduced. We are familiar with the fact that when a fashion has been introduced and has become common our eye is formed to it, and no one looks "right" or stylish who does not conform to it. We also know that after the fashion has changed things in the discarded fashion look dowdy and rustic. No one can resist these impressions, try as he may. This fact, in the experience of everybody, gives us an example of the power of current custom over the individual. While a fashion reigns its tendency is to greater and greater extravagance in order to produce the desired and admired effect. Then the toleration for any questionable element in the fashion is extended and the extension is unnoticed. If a woman of 1860, in the dress of her time, were to meet a woman of 1906, in the dress of her time, each would be amazed at the indecency of the dress of the other. No dress ever was more, or more justly, denounced for ugliness, inconvenience, and indecency than the crinoline,- but all the women from 1855 to 1865, including some of the sweetest who ever lived, wore it. No inference whatever as to their

taste or character would be justified. There
never is any
rational judgment in the fashion of dress. No
criticism can
reach it. In a few cases we know what actress or
princess
started a certain fashion, but in the great majority
of cases we do
not know whence it came or who was responsible
for it. We all
have to obey it. We hardly ever have any chance
to answer
back. Its all-sufficient sanction is that "
everybody wears it,"
or wears it *so*. Evidently this is only a special
application to
dress of a general usage — conventionalization.